

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 10 and 17 are pending in this application. Claims 1-9 and 11-16 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claim 10 is amended, and Claim 17 is new. Support for the changes to the claims is found in the originally filed disclosure, including the drawings at least in Figs. 5-6 and the specification at least in paragraphs [0019] and [0024]. No new matter is added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claim 10 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. 6,416,904 (Reimers) in view of U.S. 6,027,835 (Fukumura).

Claim 10 recites:

A method of producing a cell electrode plate comprising a band-like core member made of metal foil, the method comprising:
applying and drying a plurality of sheets of electrode active material discontinuously on and longitudinally of at least one of upper and lower surfaces of the core member; and
pressing the sheets by press rolls of a roll press machines, wherein
a first sheet of the sheets of electrode active material applied on one of the upper and lower surfaces of the core member *has end positions widthwise of the core member which are different from end positions of other sheets* of electrode active material widthwise of the core member, and
the axial positions of the press rolls at which the end positions *of the first sheet* widthwise of the core member contact *are different from the axial positions of the press rolls* at which the end positions *of other sheets* widthwise of the core member contact to thereby provide the sheets of electrode active material on said core member.
[Emphasis added].

As emphasized above, Claim 10 defines a method of producing a cell electrode plate comprising a band-like core member made of metal foil and sheets of electrode active material provided thereon. The sheets of electrode active material are applied discontinuously on and longitudinally of at least one of upper and lower surfaces of the core member. A first of the sheets has end positions widthwise of the core member, where the first sheets' end positions are different from end positions of other sheets.

By way of this amendment, this feature is further clarified to indicate that the end positions relative to axial positions on the press rolls (between the first and other sheets) are different. Specifically, to avoid the deformation of press rolls (as in Fig. 5 of the application), the end positions of the sheets are provided at different axial positions of the press roll. Therefore, a worn amount of surfaces of the press roll can be reduced, and as a result, the service life of the press rolls can be prolonged.¹

The Office Action acknowledges Reimers fails to disclose a sheet of electrode active material which has end positions widthwise of the core member which are different from end positions of other sheets widthwise of the core member.² Moreover, in responding to the Arguments filed February 22, 2010, the Office Action further states, “Fukumura does not disclose that a sheet of electrode active material ... has end positions widthwise of the core member which are different from end positions of other sheets.”³

However, the Office Action contends that such an arrangement would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention because, “Fukumura discloses that it is *possible* to adjust the position of the electrode active material mix by shifting the position of the electrode active material mix through different methods.”⁴ However, the Office is reminded that *possible* modifications to a prior art reference do not eliminate the requirement for establishing factual evidence in establishing a *prima facie* case of obviousness.

Nonetheless, the “adjustment” described in Fukumura and relied upon in the Office Action is an adjustment in the *feeding direction* of the current collector (as opposed to the claimed *widthwise direction*). Specifically, as stated in Fukumura, the current collector 21 of Fig. 1A is shown “with its width being set in the depth direction of the drawing sheet, with its thickness being set in the vertical direction of the drawing sheet, and with its longitudinal

¹ See Specification, paragraph [0019] and Fig. 5.

² Office Action, page 3.

³ Office Action, page 5.

⁴ *Id.*, (citing Fukumura, column 5, lines 14-26).

direction being set in the horizontal direction.”⁵ The feed direction 26 is shown in Fig. 1C, such that a “portion 31 of the electrode sheet *not* covered with both the electrode depolarizing mix layers 24a and 24b is pressed first.”⁶

All of the drawings shown in Fukumura show a width being set in the depth direction of the drawing sheet. Accordingly, since Fukumura is otherwise silent regarding width-wise adjustments (or even widths of the electrode depolarizing mix layers), it is unclear how Fukumura could possibly provide a disclosure sufficient for one of ordinary skill in the art to arrive at the claimed invention.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted the art of record fails to disclose or reasonably suggest the features of Claim 10 and the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) should be withdrawn.

Consequently, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Should the examiner disagree, the examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned to discuss any remaining issues. Otherwise, an early Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

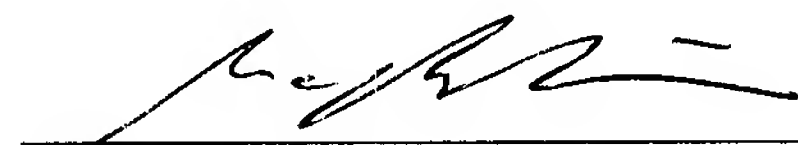
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⁵ Fukumura, column 2, lines 50-55.

⁶ Fukumura, column 3, lines 36-39.